

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJECT: EDITORIAL IN THE IRISH TIMES JUNE 7, 1978

FOLLOWING EDITORIAL APPEARED IN THE IRISH TIMES
JUNE 7, 1978 UNDER HEADING COLLECTIVE RISK:

ALTHOUGH THE COMMUNIQUE WHICH CONCLUDED THE PARIS
MEETING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF FIVE WESTERN NATIONS
TO DISCUSS AFRICA WAS CAREFULLY UNINFORMATIVE, ITS
RETICENCE REFLECTED ACCURATELY ENOUGH THE DOUBTS
AND DIVISIONS WHICH OBLIQUELY EMERGED. THE
DELEGATES, IT MUST BE REMEMBERED, WERE ONLY SENIOR
OFFICIALS, WHOSE TASK WAS TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO
THEIR RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS. NOBODY, IT SEEMED,
EXCEPT THE FRENCH, PRESSED HARD FOR THE INFORMATION
OF AN INTER-AFRICAN, SEMI-PERMANENT "FIRE BRIGADE"
FOR DUTY IN TROUBLE-SPOTS; AND BRITAIN AND WEST
GERMANY WERE HESITANT ABOUT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
A WORLD "SOLIDARITY" FUND FOR SO-CALLED MODERATE
STATES IN AFRICA. (WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF A
"MODERATE" STATE?)

THE UNITED STATES IS TAKING THE LINE THAT EACH
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AFRICAN PROBLEM SHOULD BE ASSESSED SEPARATELY, ON
ITS OWN MERITS; AND THIS MEANT THAT THE PARIS
DISCUSSIONS WERE DOMINATED BY ZAIRE. NEXT WEEK,
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FIVE, TOGETHER WITH THOSE
OF SAUDI ARABIA, CANADA, IRAN, THE INTERNATIONAL
MONETARY FUND AND THE WORLD BANK, WILL MEET IN
BRUSSELS TO CONSIDER THE RESCHEDULING OF

ZAIRE'S HUGE FOREIGN DEBT; AND THE UNITED STATES
HAS GUARANTEED A FIXED SUM IN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
FOR THE NEXT THREE MONTHS.

THERE SEEMS TO BE A GROWING AWARENESS OF THE DANGERS
INHERENT IN ANY FORM OF COLLECTIVE WESTERN INVOLVEMENT
IN AFRICA. THIS IS WISE, SINCE GROUP-INTERVENTION -
EVEN ON A PURELY LOGISTICAL OR ECONOMIC BASIS -
IS BOUND TO BE "PROPAGANDISED" AS A SCREEN FOR
NATO STRATEGY. THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER, WHO
HAS JUST RETURNED FROM THE UNITED STATES,
YESTERDAY WARNED AGAINST PRECIPITATE ENTANGLEMENTS
IN AFRICA, WHOSE SOVEREIGN STATES SHOULD BE
ENCOURAGED TO SETTLE THEIR OWN DISPUTES. HE
SOUNDED MORE CONVINCED ON THIS SCORE THAN HE DID
A WEEK AGO.

LAST YEAR, PRESIDENT CARTER POINTED AT THE RISKS
CARRIED BY WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS AN INORDINATE FEAR
OF COMMUNISM. EVENTS IN AFRICA LATELY HAVE
INDUCED HIM TO HARDEN HIS ATTITUDE. AT THE SAME
TIME, AMERICAN POLICY AT THE PARIS TALKS SUGGESTS
THAT HE IS NOT BLIND TO THE CONSEQUENCES OF
DEALING HEAVY-HANDEDLY WITH AFRICAN PROBLEMS.
TANZANIA'S GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER WROTE YESTERDAY
OF A "WESTERN CONSPIRACY TO CREATE BANANA REPUBLICS
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WHICH CAN MINISTER TO NEO-COLONIAL INTERESTS..."
THIS IS AN OPINION WHICH MAY EXTEND ITSELF TO OTHER
THAN RADICAL STATES UNLESS CONSIDERABLE CARE IS
TAKEN.

MEANWHILE, THE RUSSIANS ARE HINTING THAT DELAY IN
REACHING AN AGREEMENT ON SALT 2 - LIMITATION OF
STRATEGIC WEAPONS - IS CAUSED BY "SECONDARY"
MOTIVES ON THE PART OF WASHINGTON: IN OTHER
WORDS, THE AMERICANS ARE ACCUSED OF DRAGGING THEIR
FEET UNTIL THEY GET A QUID PRO QUO CONCERNING
SOVIET-CUBAN ENGAGEMENT IN AFRICA. ALL AROUND,
THE DIPLOMATIC WATERS ARE BECOMING MUDDIER
AND MUDDIER. THE WEST IS COMMITTED TO THE SURVIVAL
OF THE UNSAVOURY MOBUTU REGIME IN ZAIRES - AT LEAST
FOR THE PRESENT. THAT IS MORE THAN ENOUGH TO BE
GOING ON WITH. A PATTERN MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO
DEVELOP WHICH WOULD ENCOURAGE EAST-WEST CONFRONTATION
IN AFRICA. THE LINE BETWEEN HELP AND INTERVENTION
HAS BEEN DANGEROUSLY BLURRED. KRENE

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